

NEWS RELEASE

*OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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For Immediate Release

MAY 5, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on April 6, 2004, **BRENT J. POWELL**, age 30, of Cisne, Illinois, was named in a six count Indictment returned by a Federal Grand Jury sitting in Benton, Illinois.

Count 1 charged that from on or about July 2002, through on or about January 23, 2004, in Jefferson County, POWELL conspired and agreed with others to manufacture and distribute fifty (50) grams or more of methamphetamine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(B); all in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846.

Counts 2 and 3 charged that on two separate dates (May 28, 2003 and January 23, 2004 respectively), in Jefferson County, POWELL possessed equipment, chemicals, products, or materials which may be used to manufacture methamphetamine, knowing, intending, and having reasonable cause to believe, that those items would be used to manufacture methamphetamine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 843(a)(6).

Count 4 charged that on or about January 23, 2004, in Jefferson County, POWELL possessed with the intent to distribute less than 50 grams of a mixture or substance containing methamphetamine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(C).

Count 5 charged that on or about January 23, 2004, in Jefferson County, POWELL was a convicted felon in possession of a firearm in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 922(g)(1) and 924(a)(2).

Count 6 charged that on or about January 23, 2004, in Jefferson County, during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime, and in furtherance of such drug trafficking crime, POWELL did knowingly possess a firearm, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A).

With respect to Count 1, POWELL faces a penalty of 5 years to 40 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$2,000,000, and a term of supervised release of not less than 4 years. With respect to Counts 2 and 3, POWELL faces a penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of up to 3 years on each count. With respect to Count 4, POWELL faces a penalty of up to 20 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$1,000,000, and a term of supervised release of not less than 3 years. With respect to Count 5, POWELL faces a penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of up to 3 years. With respect to Count 6, POWELL faces a minimum of 5 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of up to 5 years. Any sentence on Count 6 must run consecutive to any imprisonment on Counts 1-5.

An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is

presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury. The case is set for trial on July 6, 2004, in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois.

The investigation in this case was a cooperative effort between the Joint Narcotics Unit of the Mt. Vernon Police Department and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies pursuant to their participation in the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. In addition, the Jefferson County States Attorney's Office has assisted throughout the investigation.

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, the Jefferson County State's Attorney's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and Illinois State Police directed at removing guns and drugs from our communities.

The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney George Norwood.